The Sketch

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GOING TO MOSCOW EN POSTE.

THE HON. MRS. FRANCIS STEWART-MACKENZIE, *B.Sc., Economics (London), sister of the late Lord Lyell, V.C., and widow of Major the Hon. F. Stewart-Mackenzie of Seaforth, has been appointed as Assistant to the Commercial Secretary at the British Embassy, Moscow, and is the first woman to be sent to Russia in a diplomatic job. She is not, however, a member of the Diplomatic Service. She is thirty-one, a first-class linguist, a keen sportswoman, and is the author of "Mediæval Post-Bag." She has recently been working at the Ministry of Economic Warfare.*

MOTLEY NOTES.

By ALAN KEMP.

Too Bad! Having long since humbly acknowledged the inferiority of my own sex, I had supposed that the good old days of Women's Rights—and still more of Women's Wrongs—were gone beyond recall. I ought to have known better; for life is very dull without grievances, and, after all, girls will be girls and wives will be wives. They are feeling very sore, I gather, about this question of savings. John Gilpin, I seem to remember, was delighted to find that his wife "had a frugal mind"; and what husband could feel otherwise, especially in these days when economy is a private and public virtue? Is it right that a wife should be penalised for her frugality, and that a husband should be able to say: "Very right and proper, my dear—I congratulate you on your battle with the Squander Bug—and now, please, hand back the change, as I want a few cigars and a bottle of gin, and I 've heard of an absolutely dead snip for the two-thirty to-morrow"? Is not the thrifty wife justified in saying: "That's all very well, but *I* want a perm. and a new glamour-gown, and, if any such things existed, I shouldn't mind a few pots and pans and sheets and towels"?

Keeping the Change. There is to be a petition to Parliament; and Parliament (which consists largely of husbands) had better walk warily, because the women are now in a strong position—Mr. Bevin says there are a million more of them in his army than men—and they may turn nasty if provoked. Doesn't it all come down, like so many other things, to the kind of persons who are concerned? I cannot imagine any decent husband wanting to get back the change from a wife who was running the house well and conscientiously on less than he budgeted for. But he can hardly be expected to accept the situation meekly if the wife skimps the household and puts the surplus in a stocking or spends it on going to the pictures. (I hate to suggest such a thing, and I shall probably call down wrath on my head for doing so, but it *can* happen, and, I fear, does happen.) Anyhow, the parties can always make a perfectly definite and binding arrangement, and the wife always has one formidable weapon—if the husband is keeping her short, she can "pledge his credit" for necessaries. We men have very few privileges left, and it does not seem unreasonable that we should keep some control over the money that we earn in the sweat of our brows.

"I 'm sorry your parrot isn't well enough to see you. Would you care to leave a message?"

DRAWN BY JAYCOT.

Unholy Matrimony.

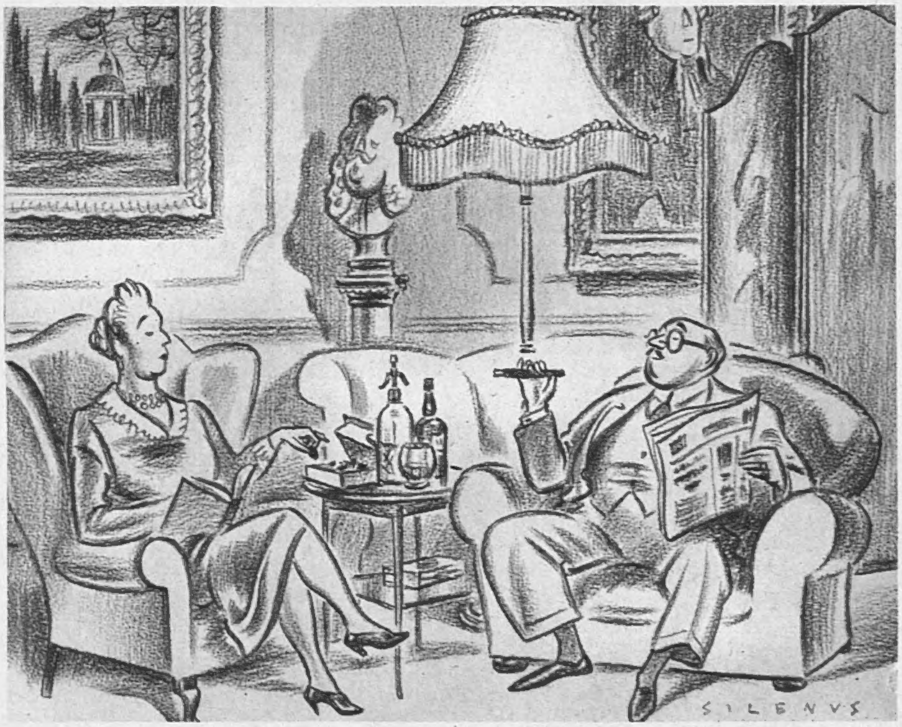
I suppose that in no two households are the financial arrangements quite the same; and considering the horrid wrangles which arise over money in so many other connections, it always strikes me as surprising that most married couples budget as well as they do. Obviously, there must be a basis of mutual confidence, and you cannot legislate for *that*. Indeed, one might go farther—considering the cranks and temperaments and frailties of us all, and how difficult it is for individuals, as well as nations, to be patient and reasonable with each other, it is a wonder that so many married couples get on at all "through all the changing scenes of life." However, it seems, regrettably, that an increasing number don't. More and more repent, not at leisure, but in indecent haste. Learned judges have been writing to the papers to say that the work which they are called on to do in undefended divorce petitions could be equally well done by a junior clerk. If that is the state to which holy matrimony is reduced, there seems little reason why divorce should not be merely a matter of a rubber stamp and a fee of half-a-crown. It looks as if we are coming to that, except that the fee, at present, is somewhat heavier.

Intake and Outtake. Anyhow, being "tied for life" does not seem to be a feminine grievance nowadays, whatever others there may be. The hardships are going one by one—even that oldest and (literally) heaviest, the eternal problem of avoirdupois the haunting spectre of the bathroom scales. Mr. Alfred Hitchcock, to whom we are all so much indebted

"How shall we manage when our window-dresser joins the Forces? I just can't imagine." (DRAWN BY JOHN G. WALTER.)

"Okay, okay, stay right there, Sir Timothy—now look, here's the Soviet bulge in the south." DRAWN BY GAIS.

for lively entertainment, has found the secret. "Basically," he says, "it is a question of cutting down your intake." I should not have thought that that was difficult in times of austerity; for a good many of us, who have sacrificed a stone or two on the altar of Mars, the problem is rather one of increasing the intake. However, while the Ministry of Food urges the intake of more potatoes, Mr. Hitchcock bans both them and bread, together with all drinking at meals and all "hard liquor"; for "alcohol turns to sugar, and sugar means fat." The prescription seems fairly simple, especially with hard liquor at 25s. a bottle; but I seem to have heard it all before, and many disillusioned women have I seen who have put their faith, all to no avail, in total abstinence from bread and potatoes and in "dry eating." Far be it from me, however, to discourage limitation of intake if it promotes charm as well as patriotism.



"There'll be no more need for us to wangle our way into Brightmouth-on-Sea at week-ends. They've lifted the ban." (DRAWN BY SILENUS.)

The Slackers.

Certainly this matter of intake may be relevant in some cases, if I may express myself tactfully, to the wearing of trousers. I observe with pain that a young woman was reprimanded the other day for appearing as a witness in court in slacks. This is sadly reactionary, for the days have long passed since the phrase "She wears the trousers" had a certain significance not pleasing to male ears. This is not the only forensic appearance of trousers lately; they appear to be acquiring a new legal importance. If you turn them up at the ends, you may not only be fined for sabotaging the war effort, but you may even be convicted of felony. The other day a safe-cracker was convicted largely on the evidence of sawdust found in his trouser turn-ups. Composed of two kinds of sawdust and, quaintly enough, of Epsom salts, it was found to be part of the fireproof packing of the violated safe, and it completely demolished an alibi. This is in the best tradition of Dr. Thorndyke. Oh, what a tangled web we weave when once we practise to defy the Emergency Regulations!

As Good as New.

But those Regulations are not always very easy to interpret, however law-abiding we may wish to be. If you neither yearn for a utility garment nor possess the coupons for it; and if you loyally wish to "make do" with your old rags; then you will naturally want to get them repaired or renovated. But what exactly is repair and what is renovation? By what degree of repairing is a gent's smart suiting "renewed" or reborn? No tailor seems to know, and, naturally, the Board of Trade does not know, although it has issued a decree that anybody can set up as a repairer of clothes, but a "renovating" establishment needs a licence. Those who are searching for the secret of perpetual youth for their wardrobes are advised to beware of the many ministrants who offer to make them "as good as new." 'Tis a false dawn: better far the mellow patina of antiquity, the frayed edges of shabby gentility, the honourable scars of Make and Mend, than what Shakespeare called "needy nothing trimmed in jollity."

Gone to the Dogs.

Certainly Make and Mend, and similar measures of war economy, seem to be doing their best to respond to the Chancellor's exhortations, for the total of savings at the end of 1942 was well on the way to seven thousand million pounds, of which about a third was represented by the pennies and shillings of the small back-the-attackers. Looking after those pence has meant that the pounds have looked after themselves to the tune of 54 per head of the whole population, while the total of savings, large and small, is estimated at £150 per head—man, woman and child. An astonishing figure, it seems to me; but a Chancellor is by nature an Oliver Twist and still asks for more. I imagine, for example, that he would like to lay hands on the forty millions which went on (and to) the dogs in 1942. What is to be added to that startling figure for the gee-gees and football, I cannot guess, but I think it must cause concern to the economist even more than the moralist. As I am neither the one nor the other, I refrain from too harsh a judgment, being only too conscious in my own poor self of the contradictions and confusions of providence and improvidence.

Grand Old Men.

I continue the Saga of Eld, to which I have made several references lately. A shock was administered to many of our more mature citizens when Mr. J. B. Priestley said that at fifty he was too old to go into politics. (Why is it that so many of those who have remedies for all our ills, not only hesitate to go and do the job of reforming, but never tire in their scorn for those who are trying to do it?) Naturally, everybody asked at once: What about Mr. Gladstone? For the matter of that, what about Mr. Churchill? What about that negro who died the other day in America, aged 112, bright and hearty to

[Continued overleaf.

"You're yaller!"
DRAWN BY KAY.

Continued.]

the end ? A writer to *The Times* gives a remarkable list of the achievements of senility, and I, for one, learned for the first time that Goethe was 80 when he wrote "Faust," and Titian 98 when he painted "The Battle of Lepanto" (surely an all-time record, this !). Old soldiers, too, never die—there were Von Moltke, and Hindenburg, and even the Duke himself ; old lawyers are also remarkably tough—witness the first Earl of Halsbury and many other Bright Old Things of Bar and Bench. Let not Mr. Priestley be discouraged — there is still room for Elder Statesmen. We may yet see him the Grand Old Man of the House of Commons, or even —dare I suggest it ? —of the House of Lords.

"**Hush, hush, whisper who dares,**
Christopher Robin is saying his prayers . . ."

DRAWN BY PAT AULD.

Food of the Gods.

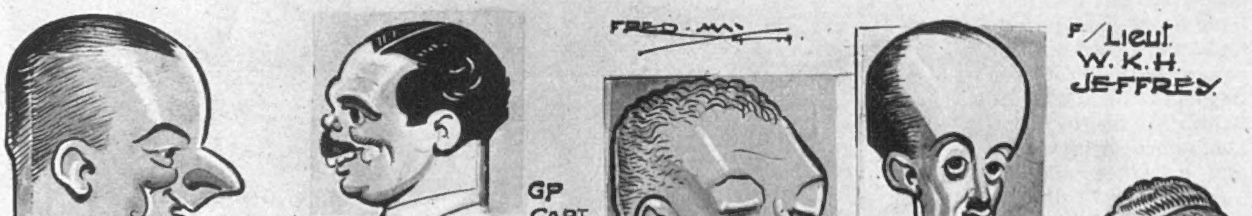
If these miraculous new drugs continue to be discovered, there seems to be no reason why everybody should not live for ever (if you can bear the thought). The latest is an extract, for which we seem to be indebted to the simple autumn crocus, which is going to make everything grow overnight to giant size. All our gardening troubles will be over ; feed a little of this colchicine to a cabbage and next morning you will have something resembling a palm-tree. On warm afternoons you will be able to sit in the shade of the lettuces. Even before this discovery, I noticed that the Lincolnshire horticulturists were promising us a tulip after the war with a wing-span of ten inches. It is all rather reminiscent of Mr. Wells's Food of the Gods. I am not sure that I am exhilarated by the prospect of an onion as big as a football or a brussels sprout as big as a coconut. What I should appreciate far more would be something which would ensure that the army of crawling, clinging, flying, burrowing and nibbling creatures should leave me just a little portion of cabbage for my own consumption. If science can give us that, it will have made a notable advance in human happiness.

Faster and Farther.

I suppose the same is to be said of jet-propulsion, and that we ought to be very grateful for that. So we are, for purposes of war, and when we Many think of the Few, they all know what they owe to the Back-Room Boys. My only quarrel with them is that they remind me so painfully of my own inadequacy. I have read a good many accounts of the principle of jet-propulsion, and the only impression left on my mind is that there are more and more things in this complicated world which I simply have to take on trust. The more science governs our lives, the more we have to live by acts of faith. The faster we go and the farther we range, the less time we have to ask why and whither ?

Manna from Heaven.

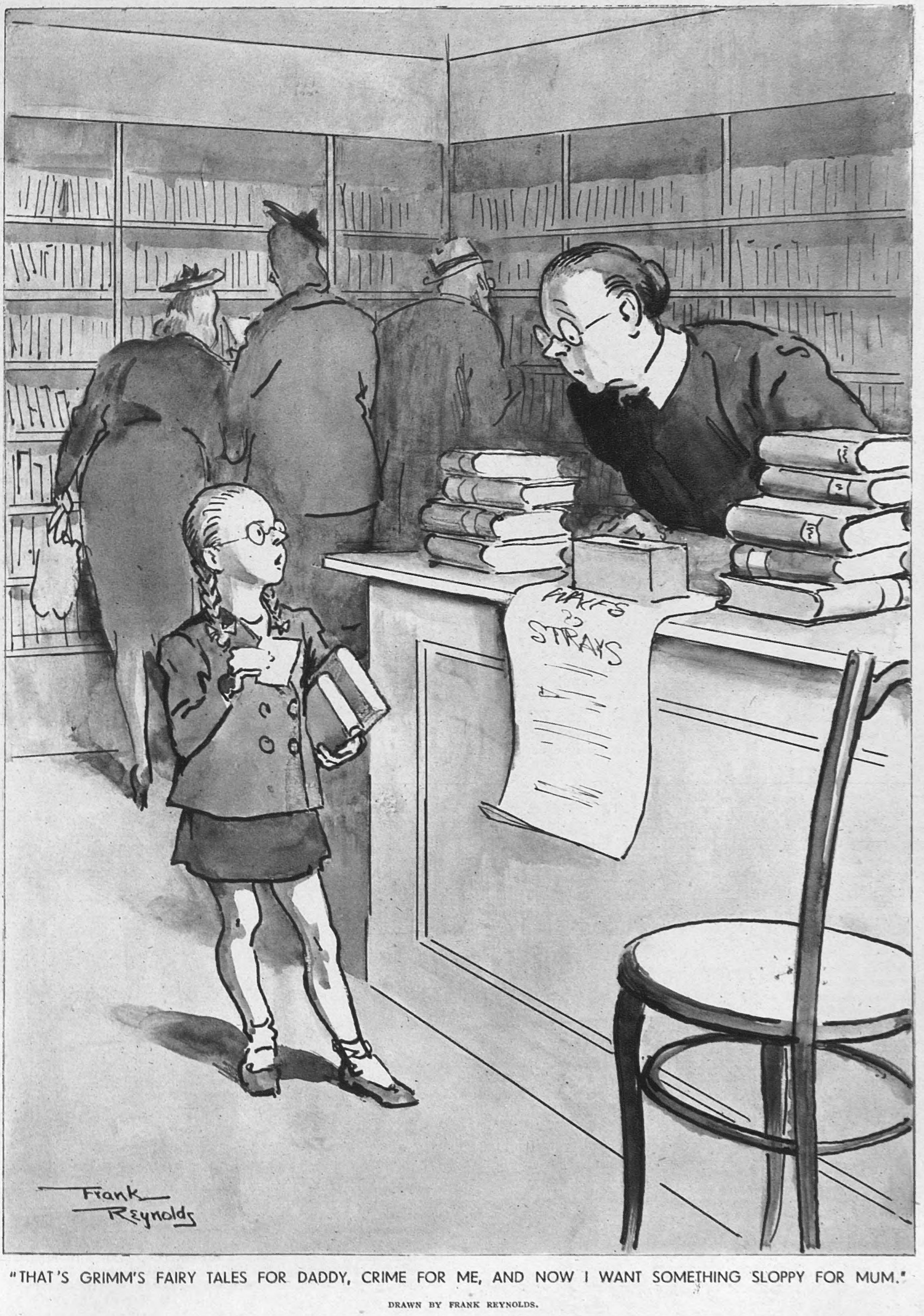
If you have attempted lately to buy a suitcase, or any other means of conveying personal belongings from place to place, you will have read with envy of a Sicilian town on which there recently descended from the sky a shower of suitcases. Very smart and handsome, too—for they belonged to the leader of a popular dance band. Stress of weather led to their being jettisoned from an aeroplane. This is more, in my opinion, than Sicily has deserved, and if the same band is flying again in stormy weather, I hope it will come this way. They can keep their saxophones so long as I have the suitcases.



Turning over the pages of his sketch-book, our artist came across this set of COMMANDING HEADS OF THE R.A.F. *from a certain Command station. They are all well known in the Service, and several of them need no introduction to the general public.*

DRAWN BY FRED MAY.

The eighty-first of our SERIES OF PLATES IN FULL COLOUR *published in this issue of "The Sketch" is by* DAVID WRIGHT.

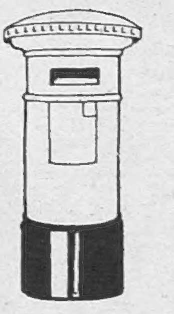


"THAT'S GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES FOR DADDY, CRIME FOR ME, AND NOW I WANT SOMETHING SLOPPY FOR MUM."

DRAWN BY FRANK REYNOLDS.

Please forward

By JOYCE DENNYS.



MY DEAR ROBERT—Mrs. Savernack and I have become Bosom Friends. I know this news will astonish you; indeed, it has astonished me more than a little, for though Mrs. S. and I have always had a lurking affection for each other we have never let it be known, and she never misses an opportunity of saying, both to my face and behind my back, that she considers me vain, facetious and vague.

It all happened because of my Arm, which has got neuritis in it and aches at night. This is because of something I 've done to my shoulder. I can't remember the name of the injury, but when you do it to your leg it 's called "Housemaid's Knee." It started quite gradually, and wasn't much of a bother at first, but when this neuritis business began it wasn't so funny. When you haven't slept much for six weeks or so, you burn with a desire to tell people about it, and I became, like the Ancient Mariner, always trying to hook people with my bony finger and Tell My Story. In the poem the Wedding Guest simply hated it, and kept on saying, "I fear thee, Ancient Mariner," and who can blame him? After a time people began to fear me, and fled at my approach, lest I might begin my story of what I had endured, hour by hour, during the night.

"Lady B. sat down carefully."

The funny thing about a Pain is that unless people have had the same Pain themselves, they aren't particularly sorry for you. Everybody I told about my Arm said, "Neuritis? Poor Henrietta," and at once began telling me about the Pains they had had in the night. Lady B., who is always kind, was away, so that made Mrs. Savernack's sympathy, when it was so unexpectedly poured upon me, all the sweeter.

Mrs. Savernack is one of those who practise a sort of Christian Science for other people, but not for themselves. Once, when I cut an artery in my thumb, she said: "Henrietta is so neurotic," as though I had imagined the whole thing. So when I saw her coming down the Street, I said to myself, "Now this is somebody who will not listen to the story of your Arm," but just then Colonel Simpkins passed and shouted from the other side of the road, "How 's the Arm, Henrietta?"

"What 's the matter with your arm?" said Mrs. Savernack, pausing in front of me and speaking severely.

"OH, nothing much," I said, shuffling with my feet.

"Don't hang your head like that, Henrietta. What is the *matter* with your arm?"

"It just aches a bit at night, Mrs. Savernack. I 'm the Lady With The Cramp, ha-ha."

But Mrs. Savernack was not amused—she never is at my jokes. She bent down and peered into my face. "You haven't got neuritis, have you?" she said in a low voice.

"Well——yes."

"Then, my dear child, what are you doing standing here in this *biting* wind?" she cried, and before I could recover from my surprise she had whisked me into the nearest tea-shop and ordered coffee.

"I once had neuritis in my arm," she said, leaning across the table and speaking in a confidential manner. "The nights were terrible."

"Ah!"

"Have you tried resting your arm on a pillow?"

"Yes, but it doesn't seem to make much difference."

"I know. In the end I had a sort of pulley suspended from the ceiling, and slung my arm in that, but part of the ceiling came down. You 'd never get it mended these days."

"I might put my bed in the doorway and sling it from there."

"That 's an idea."

"What *are* you two talking about?" said the Admiral, pausing at our table. "Your noses are almost touching."

"Neuritis," said Mrs. Savernack, resenting the intrusion.

"Ah, how is the Arm, Henrietta?" said the Admiral carelessly. Then he drew a chair up to our table and sat down.

"I once had sciatica," he said, leaning forward. "The nights were terrible."

"Sciatica? Pooh!" said Mrs. Savernack.

"It 's all very well to say, 'Sciatica pooh,' like that," said the Admiral, turning quite red with annoyance. "My Doctor said it was the most painful thing you could have."

"Not as painful as neuritis," said Mrs. Savernack, firmly.

"Pshaw!"

"Is it, Henrietta? You, as a Doctor's Wife, ought to know."

"Don't hang your head like that, Henrietta."

"As a Doctor's Wife I don't know anything about it, but as an ordinary woman with an Arm it seems pretty bad."

"Sciatica goes right down your leg," said the Admiral.

"And neuritis goes right down your arm," said Mrs. Savernack, glaring at him. "Beside, it 's nearer the Brain."

"I don't think anybody knows what anybody else's pain is like," I said. "It 's like saying, 'What do bananas taste like to you?'"

"I 've forgotten what bananas taste like, anyway," said the Admiral in a defeated way.

This unsatisfactory conversation was interrupted by Lady B., who walked into the teashop. "I thought you were away!" we all cried.

Lady B. sat down very carefully on the edge of a chair. "I came back last night," she said. "I 've got Lumbago. I always feel Lumbago is the sort of thing to have in your own home rather than in somebody else 's."

"We were just having an interesting chat about sciatica when you came in," said the Admiral.

"And neuritis," said Mrs. Savernack.

"Pains are horrible," said Lady B., "especially at night. When my Lumbago is bad and I get very sorry for myself, I think of all those poor boys in Italy fighting in the snow and sleet, and then I feel how lucky I am to be in a warm bed."

"I'm glad you're back," I said to Lady B. as we walked home. "You 'll be surprised to hear that I 've become Bosom Friends with Mrs. Savernack in your absence."

"I always told you she was nice," said Lady B.

My Arm doesn't seem to get much better, and now Charles has to do my hair. He gathers it up in his hand so that I look like one of Bluebeard's Wives, and then he screws it into a knob so that I look like Widow Twankey. He bangs the knob with his fist to make it go flat. I have only got two hairpins—they are called Castor and Pollux—and I love them more than life. I am terrified lest Charles should put them in loosely, and they fall out and get lost. Charles says he would make a better job of my hair if he had a few more hairpins to work with.

"One of Bluebeard's wives."

Now I have started a cold. Charles rang up Lady B. in a desperate way, and said: "There is only a one-armed woman with bronchitis between me and starvation." So Lady B. asked him to dinner.

Always your affectionate Childhood's Friend, HENRIETTA.

INVASION AHEAD— A NEW APPOINTMENT.

VICE-ADMIRAL PERCY W. NELLES, *Chief of Staff of the Royal Canadian Navy, has been appointed Senior Flag Officer overseas. He will have general supervision of the Canadian Navy overseas from a H.Q. in London. When announcing the appointment, the Minister for the Navy said that the British end of the Atlantic battle-line had assumed a new significance as the area from which an attack on Europe would be launched, and in view of this it was felt that the senior Canadian officer in Britain should be of high rank.*

CAMERA PORTRAIT BY KARSH OF OTTAWA.

CINEMA CAMEOS.

By C. A. LEJEUNE.

No spinner of sea yarns—not Rafael Sabatini himself, nor Robert Louis Stevenson, who loved to lay his romance on thick—could have imagined a more incredible adventure than the film "SAN DEMETRIO, LONDON" (Regal), this true story of a British crew who salvaged and sailed home their own ghost-ship. It is so long since it happened—more than three years by the calendar, more than three centuries by the heavy reckoning of war-time—that many people have forgotten the extraordinary voyage of the tanker *San Demetrio* in November 1940. But at the time it thrilled the nation. I have no doubt that when the great dramatic stories of the war come to be collected, the saga of this embattled little tanker will figure high in the list.

In the late autumn of 1940, the year of Dunkirk, the year of the Battle of Britain, the year of so many brave adventures, *San Demetrio* set out on the return voyage to Britain, deep-laden with American petrol. With 900 miles of the Atlantic still to cross, the convoy was attacked by the German pocket-battleship *Von Scheer*. The escort ship, *Jervis Bay*, went down in a heroic delaying action, giving most of the convoy time to scatter.

The tanker *San Demetrio* was one of the unlucky ones. A shell from *Von Scheer* struck her and started a blaze. The captain, realising that if the blaze reached her cargo it would blow them all to kingdom come, gave the order to abandon ship. Before taking to the lifeboats he destroyed the ship's papers and the log. Three lifeboats were launched. Two were picked up fairly quickly, and the captain himself landed in Newfoundland. The third boat, with sixteen men, including the second officer and the chief engineer, drifted helplessly for a couple of days. On the evening of the second day, they sighted a ship. A British ship. A burning ship. Their own *San Demetrio*, still burning, still miraculously afloat.

They climbed aboard the white-hot decks, and managed to put out the fires. With infinite patience, resource and effort, they got her under way. They had no bridge, no charts, no wireless, no signal flags, no compass, and no steering gear. But they made do with a school atlas and a hand-made wheel. One man died of internal injuries, but the fifteen others sailed the tanker home. Ten days later, "guided by guess and by God," *San Demetrio* steamed into the mouth of the Clyde, with the torn Red Duster flying. Out of her cargo of 12,000 tons of precious petrol, the crew had saved 11,000.

Perhaps the most unlikely thing of all about the romance of the ghost-ship *San Demetrio* is that it had a happy ending. At the subsequent action held at the Admiralty Court, the crew were awarded £14,700 salvage money. A prize for sailing your own ship home to harbour! Come on, you romantic, happy-end, wishful thinkers of fiction! Try if you can beat that!

With this story material to work on, you might say "San Demetrio, London," was a natural. Actually, the way in which the director, Charles Frend, has managed to turn his facts to dramatic account is one of the most remarkable features of the picture. For observe what so often happens when an incident drawn from real life is made the subject of a film.

(1) It is given a "box-office twist." This is done by adding a couple of blondes and possibly a torch-singer, certainly a comedy man; changing the story whenever the Good Ones make an error of judgment or the Bad Ones show a glimmer of intelligence; awarding medals all round, and introducing a spot of celestial background music. In this case the story, although striking, is apt to lose its conviction.

(2) It is "documented." This may be done by setting out the truth in the most austere and impersonal terms; including a great many shots of engines, machines, tea-cups, maps, tools and other inanimate objects; and giving the acting parts to non-professionals, who seem to have been selected primarily for their outstanding homeliness or remarkable inaudibility. In this case the story, although realistic, is apt to lose a good deal of its excitement.

Ealing Studios, who produced "San Demetrio, London," seem to me to have arrived at a very satisfactory compromise between document and drama. They have based their script on the official account by F. Tennyson Jesse, and restrained every impulse to put a celestial choir into the crow's-nest, or a blonde in the captain's locker. On the other hand, they have cast the film with professional actors, who know how to interpret emotion and character. This acting team, including Walter Fitzgerald as the Chief Engineer; Robert Beatty, the Canadian actor, as the only American member of the crew; Mervyn Johns as the greaser who dies of his injuries; Gordon Jackson as the Scottish mess-boy; and Barry Letts as the Welsh apprentice—this acting team is so all-round good, and works with such complete co-ordination, that it would be misleading to pick out individual performances.

If I were asked, though, to mention the one scene in "San Demetrio, London," that stands out most clearly in my memory, I should have no hesitation whatsoever. It is the scene in which the young Scot brings his dying companion a tiny portion of potato mashed up in condensed milk—the choicest titbit the ship can offer. That very simple moment remains for me the most moving in the whole picture—which is, I may add, no mean praise.

It is wondrous and inexplicable how fashions in heroes come and go. During the years that I have spent reviewing films, I have seen a dozen or more professions succeed one another as the ideals of feminine admiration, the ranks from which a smart bride will choose her bridegroom. Once upon a time it was the outdoor man, the clean-limbed Westerner from God's Wide Open Spaces. Then artists and sky-pilots had a run, followed by boxers, authors, racing motorists, and vaudeville hoofers. Doctors were a sure card for years, and there was quite a little vogue for bridge-builders; architects with firm, strong jaws and the eyes of visionaries. Theatrical producers did well for a time, until they were defeated by the more cultural charms of schoolmasters and publishers.

THE BEST PLAYS.

*Starred by "The Sketch." ***=highest value.*

*** "BLITHE SPIRIT" (*Duchess*). Noel Coward's play. Betty Ann Davies, Cecil Parker, Irene Browne, Beryl Measor.

*** "PINK STRING AND SEALING WAX" (*Duke of York's*). 1880 Brighton comedy. Iris Hoey, Dorothy Hyson, David Horne.

** "THE DANCING YEARS" (*Adelphi*). Ivor Novello in his romantic musical play, with Muriel Barron and Roma Beaumont.

** "SWEET AND LOW" (*Ambassadors*). Hermione Gingold and Henry Kendall in revue.

** "THE LISBON STORY" (*Hippodrome*). Play with music.

** "CLAUDIA" (*St. Martin's*). Joyce Redman and Hugh Sinclair on an American farm.

** "SOMETHING IN THE AIR" (*Palace*). Musical, with Jack Hulbert, Cicely Courtneidge.

** "ARC DE TRIOMPHE" (*Phœnix*). Ivor Novello's Paris cavalcade—1906-1925—with Mary Ellis, Raymond Lovell, Peter Graves, Elisabeth Welch.

** "PANAMA HATTIE" (*Piccadilly*). Musical comedy, with Bebé Daniels, Richard Hearne, Max Wall, Ivan Brandt, Claude Hulbert.

** "STRIKE A NEW NOTE" (*Prince of Wales*). George Black's revue, with the rising generation and Sid Field.

** "MY SISTER EILEEN" (*Savoy*). American slapstick with Sally Gray, Coral Browne, Max Bacon.

** "ARSENIC AND OLD LACE" (*Strand*). Witty, murderous farce. Lilian Braithwaite, Mary Jerrold, Naunton Wayne, Frank Pettingell, Edmund Willard.

** "WHILE THE SUN SHINES" (*Globe*). Rattigan's inter-allied complications without tears. Jane Baxter, Ronald Squire, Hugh McDermott.

** "JUNIOR MISS" (*Saville*). Comedy with the accent on youth. Joan White, Peggy Cummins.

** "HI-DE-HI" (*Stoll*). Hilarious revue, with Flanagan and Allen, Florence Desmond, Eddie Gray.

** "IT'S TIME TO DANCE" (*Lyric*). With Jack Buchanan, Fred Emney, Elsie Randolph.

** SADLER'S WELLS BALLET (*New*). Robert Helpmann, Margot Fonteyn. Constant Lambert conducts.

** "THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT" (*Aldwych*). Wonderful acting by the Lunts in Robert Sherwood play.

* "AN IDEAL HUSBAND" (*Westminster*). Donat's ideal Wilde revival. Irene Vanbrugh, Martita Hunt, Esme Percy.

* "THIS TIME IT'S LOVE" (*Comedy*). Comedy from the French: George Desmond, Ellen Pollock, Charles Heslop, Beryl Mason.

* "SHE FOLLOWS ME ABOUT" (*Garrick*). Farce. Robertson Hare, Basil Radford, Catherine Lacey, Joyce Heron.

* "LOVE FOR LOVE" (*Haymarket*). Congreve comedy with John Gielgud, Yvonne Arnaud, Leslie Banks, Leon Quartermaine.

* "MR. BOLFRY" (*Playhouse*). New James Bridie play. Alastair Sim.

* "TEN LITTLE NIGGERS" (*St. James's*). Agatha Christie's thriller. Linden Travers, Allan Jeayes, Terence de Marney.

* "ACACIA AVENUE" (*Vaudeville*). Comedy. Gordon Harker, Hubert Gregg, Dorothy Hamilton, Megs Jenkins.

* "THE LOVE RACKET" (*Victoria Palace*). High-speed musical with Arthur Askey and Carol Raye.

* "QUIET WEEK-END" (*Wyndham's*). Sequel to "Quiet Wedding."

* "HALFWAY TO HEAVEN" (*Princes*). Bobby Howes, Sydney Howard, Betty Stockfield.

PANTOMIMES AND CHILDREN'S PLAYS.

"CINDERELLA" (*His Majesty's*). Evelyn Laye, Carole Lynne. "HUMPTY DUMPTY" (*London Coliseum*). Pat Kirkwood, Nervo and Knox, Naughton and Gold. "ALICE IN WONDERLAND" (*Scala*). Zena Dare, Dame Sybil Thorndike, Roma Beaumont. "WHERE THE RAINBOW ENDS" (*Winter Garden*). Italia Conti's production.

N.B.—While we shall always do our best to keep this list up to date, we cannot hold ourselves responsible for any errors which may occur. Consult your daily paper; ring up the theatre to avoid disappointment.

" *The Girls He Left Behind*" *(Gaumont, Haymarket, and Marble Arch Pavilion). Twentieth Century-Fox Technicolor musical, with dancing and Benny Goodman's band, stars* CARMEN MIRANDA *(left) as Dorita, of the smart New Yorker Club; with* ALICE FAYE *in the chorus as Eadie;* PHIL BAKER *as himself running the Club, and* JAMES ELLISON *(right) as heroic U.S. Sergeant Mason, about whom the story is wrapped.*

" *Happy Land*" *(Tivoli). After the death of his son on active service, cheerful drug-store proprietor Lew Marsh* (DON AMECHE) *becomes embittered. As he broods, old Gramps Marsh* (HARRY CAREY) *appears from the grave. Step by step they trace their way back into the past, to prove that after all the boy's life was happy, and his death worth while. Frances Dee and Ann Rutherford also play in this Twentieth Century-Fox film.*

Journalists and amateur detectives have a more or less solid popularity, but the fashion in gangsters is now definitely waning. Since the war, the airman hero has had pride of place, but this cycle is beginning to run out too, it seems. To-day we begin to discern a new superman on the horizon—the band-leader.

Consider the advantages of such a hero. He is, by habit, a master of men. He rules them from his rostrum, with a sceptre in his hand. His word is law. Hundreds of simple people dance nightly to his tune. And then he is so beautifully dressed. Ah, me! Those knife-pleated evening trousers! That crisp, tropical dinner-jacket!

JAMES CAGNEY *is hero in John van Druten's screen play* " *Johnny Vagabond*" *(London Pavilion), adapted from Louis Bromfield's* " *McLeod's Folly.*" *As a vagrant, once newspaperman, he plays a beneficent part in the life of one Vinnie McGeorge, a widow who tries to run the little paper left her by her husband.*

Fred MacMurray, who plays the band-leader hero of " AND THE ANGELS SING " (Plaza), is possibly more irresistible than the real thing, but then he has to be. The gentleman he impersonates, Happy Somebody-or-Other, is almost certainly more caddish than the real thing. This Happy is a practical Don Juan. He goes about gazing into girls' eyes and murmuring, " Don't fight this thing, Gorgeous. It 's bigger than you and me." Then he borrows their dollar bills, and uses them in part-payment of the money he 's already borrowed from his orchestra.

When Happy borrows 190 dollars from a bat-witted blonde called Bobby Angel (Betty Hutton), he makes an error. For Bobby, although bat-witted, has three sisters, including Nancy Angel (Dorothy Lamour), who aren't. The Angel Sisters have been brought up by their widowed father to sing a pretty quartette. And what with their hot numbers, and their pertinacity, and their legs, and the smart, identical costumes they wear, Happy finds himself rushed into retribution and matrimony.

" And the Angels Sing " is slight, but of its kind, it 's good. It has a high level of showmanship. The cast knows its job. The lines are frequently bright. Miss Lamour, although I still feel she ought to be in a glade, beside a pool, in a sarong, is not unaware of the demands of comedy, and has no trouble at all with the sort of numbers that have been handed to her. You may, or may not, enjoy Betty Hutton's frenetic rendering of " Bluebirds in My Belfry," but there 's no doubt that, along her own lines, the girl has style.

Another vigorous performer with personality is Carmen Miranda, whom you can see in the Technicolor film " THE GIRLS HE LEFT BEHIND " (Gaumont and Marble Arch Pavilion). After this film, I had a weird desire to see Miss Miranda playing straight, without fruit on her head. So precise and vital an artist cannot be altogether dependent for appeal on a pineapple.

Carmen Miranda is not one of the girls he (James Ellison) leaves behind in " The Girls He Left Behind." She is simple Dorita, a Latin-American friend. The girls are Alice Faye and Sheila Ryan, the one as a faithful night-club singer, the other as a faithless socialite. He leaves them behind when he goes off to the Pacific wars, but as you may imagine, he quickly wins a medal and comes back again. The most remarkable thing—possibly the only remarkable thing—about the film is its passionate desire to isolate faces from their bodies and bring them charging down at you in the auditorium. Not recommended to nervous subjects after a heavy meal.

" THE DRIVE TO THE WEST " (Tatler) is another chapter of that impressive film-history of the war that the Soviet cameramen have been compiling so assiduously. Shot by a battery of cameramen on the actual battlefronts, it tells the story of the westward drive that led to the recapture of Orel, and opened the way for the present winter campaign. Like its forerunner, it is a vivid mixture of beauty and terror. There are some very touching scenes and some very horrible scenes. There are sweeping battlescapes and brief, personal character flashes that move you by their very simplicity.

With it is a small musical comedy called " SPRING SONG," by that gay and inventive director, Alexandrov. Alexandrov was a young man who worked for some years as the great Eisenstein's assistant, but suddenly decided that light musicals were his *forte*. His films have a curious pattern to people who are accustomed to Western musicals, but for my part I find myself increasingly fascinated by them. Here, I should say, is a clear case of a young man who has deliberately picked himself the right job.

Ole Olsen and Chic Johnson star in Universal's " *Crazy House*" *(Leicester Square Theatre). These two comedians find a film backer in an impoverished Colonel who hasn't a dime, though they don't know it.* MARTHA O'DRISCOLL *plays Margie in this picture, which is directed by Edward F. Cline.*

WAR OFFICE WEDDING FASHION SHOW. *A.T.S. girls admiring the bridal attire they can obtain from the dress pool for Service brides by application to their company commanders.*

"STARS IN BATTLEDRESS," *a flying squad of Service people with stage experience, include "Flare Path" in their repertory. This is the finale. Faith Brook, A.T.S. daughter of Clive Brook, is in it.*

Right: *Ben Hur, sheepdog who appears with* BÉBÉ DANIELS *in "Panama Hattie," at the Piccadilly, has been awarded the Kennel Club diploma for his war effort—collecting over £50 for prisoners of war at the theatre.*

SQUADRON LEADER WHITTLE, *designer of the jet-propulsion 'plane, has been elected a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society without application being made as usual. He is seen with* MRS. WHITTLE, DAVID *(left) and* IAN.

These girls are not making up for beauty—but for safety before dangerous work in a high-explosive factory. A special cream masks hands and face; no metal clips, pins, etc., can be carried. The girls wear spruce cream suits, rubber shoes and close-furled turbans.

JOAN FONTAINE *and her husband,* BRIAN AHERNE, *are seldom snapshotted in real life, but the camera caught them at the Hollywood Palladium. She has been making a big hit as Jane Eyre.*

ON AND OFF DUTY PICTURES

Somewhere in England the R.A.F. produced the panto. "QUEEN OF HEARTS." This is the whole cast grouped round Warrant Officer Collins, the manager and director of the show, which was produced by Cpl. E. V. McGrath.

KAY FLYNN and P. KERRIDGE played the Princess and the Knave in the R.A.F. production of "Queen of Hearts." The cast of forty was made up of R.A.F. and W.A.A.F. personnel.

Vicky, the dog who appears in "Halfway to Heaven," at the Princes, came with star BETTY STOCKFIELD to the United Charities Fair. MRS. CALVERT EMPSON is on the left in our picture.

MLLE. ALICE DELYSIA, revue star who has been entertaining troops tirelessly in the Middle East, married COMMANDER RENÉ KOLB-BERNARD, of the Free French Forces, at Caxton Hall Register Office.

MR. CHURCHILL returned to England last week, looking fully restored to health. Here he is at the station in Trinity House uniform, with MRS. CHURCHILL.

MRS. MARY LAW, daughter-in-law of the late Mr. Andrew Bonar Law, presented to the R.A.F. an Auster aircraft, a gift from Mrs. Gordon, sister of the late Captain Bertram Dickson, Army Co-operation aviation pioneer.

OF ARTISTS AND WAR-WORKERS.

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO—

THAT vivid impersonator FLORENCE DESMOND irresistibly suggests Manet's "Barmaid" *en grande tenue* as she shakes a cocktail for a friend while wearing Queen Alexandra's 1904 Court gown. This was prior to the auction of the dress in aid of Mrs. Churchill's Aid to Russia Fund—a gift from Jack Hylton. The band leader bought the dress two years ago in aid of the Red Cross, so it has done its share for charity.

FAMOUS tough-guy screen-star GEORGE RAFT should get a rousing welcome here from the Forces whom he has come over to entertain. He joins a galaxy already over from Hollywood, which, either as "G.I.s" or as entertainers, continually swells in number.

FLORENCE DESMOND—*for her unconscious parody of Manet's "Barmaid"* en grande tenue *as, wearing a Royal Court gown, she shakes a cocktail.*

GEORGE RAFT—*for bringing the rough stuff over here to entertain the troops.*

FROM one of the biggest air-battles over Germany 2ND LIEUT. WILLIAM F. CELY, of Texas, and his co-pilot, 2ND LIEUT. JABEZ CHURCHILL, of California, brought back their Flying Fortress "Frenesi," consisting chiefly of holes held together by scrap-metal. With a flock of F.W. 190's on her tail, the right- and left-wing men gone, the Fort went into a tremendous dive, shot to pieces. One of the crew told the pilot his parachute had gone. "Never mind," said Cely, "Poppa 'll bring you home!" Which he did, as the picture shows. "Frenesi" is now scrapped for salvage.

AT Atlantic City last month JEAN BARTEL, of California (entered as "Miss California"), nineteen-year-old, 5 ft. 8 in. tall, brown-haired, blue-eyed, won the annual title of "Miss America" from JOE CARROLL DENNISON, "Miss America 1942," a fellow-Californian who stands a step or two above her in the photograph.

MLLE. EVE CURIE, daughter of the discoverers of radium and author of two brilliant books, has recently arrived in Algiers. She has been appointed full Lieutenant in the French Army, and is on the staff of General Delattre de Tassigny, who will command a new French Expeditionary Corps. Mlle. Curie's duties will be to aid French refugees and the homeless when France is invaded.

Left: 2ND LIEUT. W. F. CELY—*for saying "Poppa 'll bring you home," and with his co-pilot,* 2ND LIEUT. CHURCHILL, *safely landing his battle-holed Fortress on an English airfield, after a terrific fight over Germany.*

MLLE. EVE CURIE—*for being gazetted full Lieutenant in the French Army.*

MISSES JEAN BARTEL *and* JOE DENNISON—*for being a deposed and a reigning "Miss America" and statuesque goddesses at that.*

THE PRINCESSES AS PANTO. PRINCIPALS.

This year T.R.H. PRINCESS ELIZABETH *and* PRINCESS MARGARET *chose "Aladdin" for their annual Christmas show, and played Aladdin and Princess Roxana respectively. The supporting cast of forty children included the Duke of Kent and Princess Alexandra, village boys and girls and evacuees, and the King himself lent a hand by supplying a number of the jokes. The costumes were made in the Royal Household from scraps provided by the children. The village schoolmaster, Mr. Tanner, was producer and his wife acted as wardrobe mistress.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY STUDIO LISA.

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Alice (ROMA BEAUMONT) *steps into Looking-Glass Land through the mantelpiece mirror.*

Alice samples the magic cake, anxiously wondering what the result will be.

Alice, reduced in size, stretches up to get the magic bottle. The White Rabbit (JULIAN SOMERS) *consults his watch.*

LEWIS CARROLL'S AND TENNIEL'S MAGIC STAGED: "ALICE IN WONDERLAND."

The Walrus (DAPHNE ANDERSON) *and the Carpenter* (FELICITY ANDREAE) *by the seashore with the little oysters.*

Alice visits the shop kept by the Sheep (PHYLLIS MORRIS), *which mysteriously turns into a boat.*

Left: The White Queen (DAME SYBIL THORNDIKE) *and Alice. The White Queen screams before she pricks her finger, not after!*

Right: The Mad Tea-Party: Alice, the March Hare (ROY ELLET), *the Dormouse* (PETRENA LOWTHIAN), *the Mad Hatter* (SIDNEY YOUNG).

N.B. A Coloured pl

Old Father William (DAPHNE ANDERSON). *Young Man* (FELICITY ANDREAE), *Caterpillar* (FRANKLIN DYALL).

Alice meets Tweedledum (PETER DIMUANTES) *and Tweedledee* (PETER MURRAY) *in Looking-Glass Land.*

Humpty Dumpty (JULIAN SOMERS), *serenely confident of his safety, shakes hands with Alice.*

Alice meets the White Knight (GEOFFREY DUNN) *and has some conversation with him.*

The Cook (CAROLL DODGSON), *the Duchess* (PHYLLIS MORRIS), *and her Baby, with Alice. The Cheshire Cat is on the dresser.*

LEWIS CARROLL enthusiasts might fear that some of the authentic magic of his masterpieces, "Alice in Wonderland" and "Alice Through the Looking-Glass," would be lost in translation to the stage, but they can go to the Scala to see Clemence Dane's dramatisation of "Alice in Wonderland" (with her adventures in Looking-Glass Land as a second act) without trepidation. The production is "the goods," with Gladys Calthrop *décor* and dresses in the true Tenniel manner, and an Alice who fully satisfies. Our excellent photographs prove that nothing of the authentic enchantment has been lost.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN VICKERS.

Left: The Trial: The March Hare, Alice, the Mock Turtle (PETER DIMUANTES), *the Gryphon* (EUGENE LEAHY), *the Dormouse, the King and Queen of Hearts* (FRANKLIN DYALL *and* SYBIL THORNDIKE), *etc.*

Right: Alice and the Red Queen (ZENA DARE).

inserted in this issue.

"I always take a bath before my performance": BANJO, *the Scottie, turns the tap on for himself in his dressing-room at the Savoy Theatre.*

"Just waiting for my dresser": Banjo curled up in the wash-basin of his dressing-room. He has just had his salary raised 100 per cent.—from 10s. to £1 a week.

DOG STAR OF "MY SISTER EILEEN": BANJO, THE TERRIER WHO MINDS HIS CUES.

BANJO is the little Scottie whose acting in "My Sister Eileen," the successful high-speed American comedy at the Savoy, has provided one of the hits of that lively show. He has a small part, but plays it with the most perfect timing and great spirit. He has to dash in at a dramatic moment, seize a policeman's truncheon, deliver a bark or two, and rush off in triumph with the truncheon. He was a present to Mrs. Mara, the wardrobe mistress, from Miss Coral Browne, who plays Ruth Sherwood, the sister of Eileen (Miss Sally Gray).

Banjo's toilette and stage make-up: his owner, Mrs. Mara, the wardrobe mistress, acts as his dresser and prepares him most carefully for his performance.

Banjo does his stuff: he has to dash in, seize the policeman's truncheon, bark and dash out. CORAL BROWNE *(right) and* SALLY GRAY *are watching him with* ELLIS IRVING *(right).*

"Hullo! Banjo speaking from his dressing-room": he has numerous fans who bring bones and other delicacies to the stage door.

WIFE TO CHARLIE CHAPLIN'S "BLUEBEARD."

ALICE EALAND, *twenty-four-year-old former New York model girl, has been chosen by Charlie Chaplin to play in his forthcoming production of a film version of "Bluebeard." Needless to say, Miss Ealand will be the sixth and last wife of the monster.*

"I wonder what it will be like, what it will look like": Marie Curie (GREER GARSON) and Pierre Curie (WALTER PIDGEON) at work on the task of isolating radium.

"We lived in our single preoccupation as if in a dream": Marie and Pierre Curie at their all-absorbing task, working without respite.

"In 1902, forty-five months after the day on which the Curies announced the probable existence of radium . . . Marie succeeded in preparing a decigramme of pure radium."

". . . Lord Kelvin . . . in spite of his great age, . . . asked for a meeting": Marie and Pierre Curie, Lord Kelvin (C. AUBREY SMITH) and a Professor (ALBERT BASSERMAN). The great British scientist was enthusiastic over the Curies' work.

GREER GARSON AS THE GREAT SCIENTIST: "MADAME CURIE"—THE WOMAN WHO DISCOVERED RADIUM.

"In this division of labour Marie had chosen the 'man's job.' She accomplished the toil of a day labourer." Marie Curie working in the courtyard of the shed-laboratory.

"The days of work became months and years; Pierre and Marie were not discouraged. The material, which resisted them, which defended its secrets, fascinated them."

Studying the effect which the new substance, radium, has on the human body: the Doctor looks at Madame Curie's hand, which has suffered from being fearlessly exposed to it.

"MADAME CURIE," M.-G.-M.'s film due shortly at the Empire, is based on the fine biography by her daughter, Mlle. Eve Curie. Madame Curie (1867-1934; *née* Sklodovska) won the Nobel Prize for Physics (jointly with Henri Becquerel and Pierre Curie in 1903) and the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1911, and countless other prizes and awards. To quote from her daughter's book, she ". . . belonged to an oppressed nation; she was poor, she was beautiful. A powerful vocation summoned her to study in Paris, where she lived through years of poverty and solitude. There she met a man whose genius was akin to hers. She married him . . . by the most desperate and arid efforts they discovered a magic element, radium. . . . At the moment when the fame of the two scientists was spreading . . . her husband was taken from her by death. . . . She continued alone the work . . . and brilliantly developed the science they had created together." The words quoted under each "still" on our pages are from Eve Curie's biography of her mother. Mlle. Curie, whose latest book, "Journey Among Warriors," is a best-seller, is now serving in the women's auxiliary of the Free French Forces. She is a lieutenant and has been appointed to a post on the staff of General Delattre de Tassigny, in Algiers.

JOHN RUDDOCK *gives a delightful performance in the name-part of "Don Abel Wrote a Tragedy," at the Arts.*

"Pick up those papers, and arrange them in their order!" *Bermudez* (LIONEL WESTLAKE), *Don Abel, Don Mauricio* (EDWARD BYRNE), *Urrutia* (ELWYN BROOK-JONES), *and Lucas* (ARTHUR BURNE).

THE COMEDY OF DON ABEL'S TRAGEDY.

"DON ABEL WROTE A TRAGEDY," Spanish comedy by the Quintero brothers, has been produced at the Arts Theatre, in an English version by Helen and Harley Granville-Barker. Civil Servant Don Abel revolts against official routine, and tries to live as a playwright, meets failure and disappointment and is glad to be reinstated in the office. But on his return he finds that a junior clerk has written a successful comedy, so he starts to collaborate with him. The charm of the piece is provided by the witty and well-observed delineation of character.

"I-I've a l-letter of introd-d-uction": Urrutia asks Dona Antonia Pacheco (GRACE LANE) *to read his play—but finds he has left it at home.*

"Well, how are we?" Don Abel and the Anonymous Gentleman (TONY QUINN). *Don Abel is much heartened by the news that the great actress Dona Antonia will read his play.*

"So that for the office . . . and the Chief . . . and the Minister . . . and the Spanish Constitution too. . . ." Don Abel, in quiet triumph, addresses his astonished chief Don Mauricio, and Urrutia.

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"SKIRTS" AT BLACKPOOL: AN ALL-AMERICAN MUSICAL ADVENTURE.

"*Women in Uniform*": *Sergt. Quirk* (SERGT. LAURIE A. SHEKLOW), *Blotto* (SERGT. ROWE M. MEADOR) *and Captain Flagg* (PTE. MARK C. BAKARIAN)

"*Their Dream*": *Fourth of July Girl* (CPL. H. C. EKENBERG), *Christmas Girl* (CPL. G. R. BUCHANAN), *Easter Girl* (SERGT. G. L. BARTON) *and Valentine Girl* (PFC. PETER CONTE).

CPL. GEORGE R. BUCHANAN *as the Pin-Up Girl, giving an elaborate fan-dance number.*

Making up for the show: PTE. GEORGE F. GREGG, CPL. NAT SHAPIRO, PFC. JOE GRABOWSKI, PTE. MARK C. BAKARIAN, PTE. DANIEL A. PERNA, PFC. VINCENT CARLINO, JUN., CPL. ROBERT E. LOCKE.

PFC. PETER CONTE *plays the* "*Bombshell*" *in the finale, in an elaborate costume à la Carmen Miranda.*

Captain Flagg (PTE. M. C. BAKARIAN) *and* "*her*" *W.A.C.s,* SERGT. LAURIE A. SHEKLOW, PFC. JOE G. GRABOWSKI, PTE. GEORGE F. GREGG, *and* PTE. DANIEL A. PERNA.

SKIRTS" is "an all-American Musical Adventure" presented by a unit of the United States Air Force, and had its première at Blackpool prior to touring American camps in the British Isles. It's produced by Lieut. Arthur G. Brest, A.C., and has the support of a lively U.S. Army Band. It's an all-male affair, with the exception of the Drum Majorette, Dorothy Gisser, who manipulates the bâton during the opening number. Each member of the cast of thirty has appeared in professional Broadway productions. The orchestra is the celebrated Flying Yanks.

A dancing number by the all-male chorus of "*Skirts*": *one of the high-speed numbers of the United States Air Force show, presented at Blackpool before touring military camps.*

A BREACH OF SECURITY.*

By PATRICK SAXON.

IT was the turn of Engineer F. Rose, a smooth lad with a roving eye, to tell the truth-stranger-than-fiction story, a weekly institution in the wardroom of the *Incredible*.

Glasses were charged and cigarettes were lit as the Engineer told the following story. . . .

Quite a lot of books have been written about Great Men and their Home Lives—the Admiral holding the wool for Mrs. Admiral, Mr. Bevin putting the cat out—and so on. But the home life of Lieutenant Peck, R.N., First Lieutenant of H.M. destroyer *Crisp*, and a great man to at least one hundred and thirty-seven of the ship's company, has never hitherto been recorded.

Joseph Peck married in Malta while convalescing from fever, and brought his wife Penelope, a nurse in the naval hospital, to Leatherhead.

For two years all went well. There were no little Pecks, but the Lieutenant was in his ship, Mrs. P. was licking the Leatherhead home into shape, and all was right with the P.s.

Then war came. Lieutenant P.'s movements became erratic, Mrs. P. had visitors from bombed areas, got about a bit more and things were not so well. Rightly or wrongly, Mrs. P. decided that Joe ought to ring her up each time he was in port and tell her where and how he was going to spend the night. She liked to know where he was.

Joe knew this was wrong and a grave breach of security, but he had begun to realise that his wife became angry if he failed in this small domestic duty. She began to get angry with him rather easily, and the anger lasted longer each time.

"It means so much to a woman," moaned Mrs. P. And Lieutenant P., simple, bearded sailor, believed her and dutifully spent his one-and-twopence after 19.00, when his ship was in harbour. But when, as sometimes happened, it took two hours to get through, and then Fred, the constant visitor, insisted on using ten-penn'orth of the time, Joe jibbed a little. . . . Until Penelope got angry.

"He's only being friendly," said Penelope of Fred. She defended Fred as if he were an idiot son. Privately, Joe called him far worse than that.

After a brace of boiler-cleaning leaves, when it was clearly shown that Fred earned twice as much as he did, and Mrs. P. mended Fred's boiler-suit and left Joe's jersey, the noble Lieutenant stroked his bushy beard and brooded. The neglected jersey was symptomatic. Fred and Joe were about the same size, and although of a mild, unsuspicious nature, Joe was convinced that his wardrobe had unaccountably shrunk. Even when he heard that Fred had joined the Navy, Joe still brooded.

When, some weeks later, H.M.S. *Crisp* docked for a refit and Lieutenant Peck was granted twenty-one days' leave, there were certain of his brother officers who decided that their First Lieutenant should be entertained. This scheme was entered into with enthusiasm by Peck, who shed his gloom and joined in the festivities without foolish restraint.

In fact, to be frank, he became plastered.

Towards the end of the plastering, the Gunnery Officer spoke apologetically to P. "I say, old boy, forgive me for mentioning it, but don't you usually let your lady know when you're coming back?"

The brows of the First Lieutenant darkened.

"I do," he muttered.

"Have you?"

"No—and I'm not going to. See?"

"Good. How about a gin?"

"I'm never going to tell her again."

"You're not?"

"No. Guns, old boy," said Peck, putting an arm round the other's shoulder and hiccoughing gently, "Guns, I curse the day I ever went to the altar at Malta."

"Oh, no, Joe."

"I wish I was shingle."

"How about a gin?" said Guns, who used this as a stock remark whenever he was at a loss for an answer.

"She nags," whispered Peck.

"Tch-ch," said Guns.

"And she bullies. And she doesn't trust me. I'm always wrong, and I can never, never pin anything on her," finished Peck desperately.

This, to an unmarried young naval officer, savoured of the indelicate, and before Joe could mention other embarrassing things, Guns said brightly: "Well, she doesn't know where you are now, anyway."

"She doesn't, does she?"

"No idea, eh!"

For several minutes Guns and Peck proved to their own satisfaction that Mrs. P. could not possibly know where the gallant Lieutenant was or when he was coming home. Indeed, at that moment, nobody knew whether Lieutenant P. would go home at all, for, in stooping forward to light his cigarette from Guns' lighter, he dipped his beard in the flame and it went up like a Very light.

With great presence of mind, Guns seized the Torpedo Officer's tankard of beer and hurled the contents into P.'s face, thus localising the blaze in the best traditions of the N.F.S.

While there is no doubt that this incident contributed to the gaiety of the party generally, on Lieutenant P. it had rather the opposite effect, and after a couple of drinks for the benefit of an unstated "road," he decided to shave off the remnants of his beard and go home.

Lieutenant Peck entertained grave misgivings when he finally reached his home about midnight. He had never in the whole course of his married life been able to put his wife in the wrong. Penelope had a flair for doing this to him even when he felt he was blameless, and to-night he felt somehow that a plea of innocence or ignorance would be treated with considerable scorn. His mouth was like the inside of a tram-driver's mitten, and his legs were slow to answer the course and speed given by his brain. And then there was his beard! Lieutenant P. often felt that his beard was the one thing remaining to him for which Penelope cared.

The cat swore gently at him as he mounted the stairs, but the house was still and dark, and for this he was grateful, for his own idea was to sneak quietly into bed and leave recriminations to the sober light of day.

He had reached the landing when the sirens wailed, and with commendable promptitude his wife came hurtling out of her room into his arms.

She gasped, and was still. Her fingers toyed with the buttons on his uniform, and then with feminine shrewdness and determination sought his shaven face.

"Fred!" she cried. "I thought you'd gone back to your ship ages ago. . . ."

There was an appreciative chuckle as the Engineer-Lieutenant finished his story. But the Paymaster, who read detective stories, objected.

"A good yarn, old boy, but how could you possibly know all this?" he asked.

"Oh," replied the Engineer, reaching for his boiler-suit, "Mrs. P. thought I ought to know as soon as possible, so she rang me up next morning."

The Paymaster nodded understandingly. "I see, Fred," he smiled.

"Joe P. never rings her up now, I hear," said the Engineer.

THE END.

**All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

By Appointment

Still carrying on

Although working under difficulties "Black & White" is still "carrying on"; still bringing to as many as possible the fine quality and mellow flavour which have made this grand old whisky a first choice everywhere.

"BLACK & WHITE"

It's the Scotch!

Until then . . .

When victory comes . . . when the gates of the prison camps have been opened . . . British prisoners of war will come streaming back to freedom. Until then, the Red Cross and St. John parcels make all the difference to their daily lives — help them to bear the privations of captivity. Enter for the

£250 RED CROSS RADIO CONTEST

in aid of the Red Cross Penny-a-Week Fund.

The Contest will be broadcast in the Forces Programme on Saturday, February 5th, and re-broadcast on Monday, February 7th.

Ford

INSERTED BY FORD MOTOR COMPANY LIMITED, DAGENHAM

Deanna's favourite playsuit has a cyclamen and white-checked blouse over-topping a tailored skirt. Enormous pockets are useful.

HOT FROM HOLLYWOOD

Her No. 1 suit is of yellow wool, sharply tailored, which she wears with black—a dramatic black béret, black suède accessories and a band of black velvet at the throat. Double brass buttons, embossed with the naval insignia, fasten the jacket at neckline and waist.

Deanna Durbin is establishing a new reputation in Hollywood: she is fast becoming the leader of "younger set" fashions. Her voice is as lovely as ever, as you will hear when her latest film, "His Butler's Sister," is shown in this country. What may surprise you is to see what a fashionable young woman she has become. Pictured here are some of her favourite clothes taken from a wardrobe which is the green-eyed envy of many.

A housecoat of grey moleskin fabric combines luxury and warmth. The high, round neckline is outlined with braided gold metal cloth.

The jumper dress—an old favourite—is newly interpreted in this black and cream two-piece. The notched armholes of the pinafore top look like epaulettes.

For formal occasions, Deanna finds her inspiration in Madame Chiang Kai-shek. The severe simplicity of this is dramatised by intricate embroidery.

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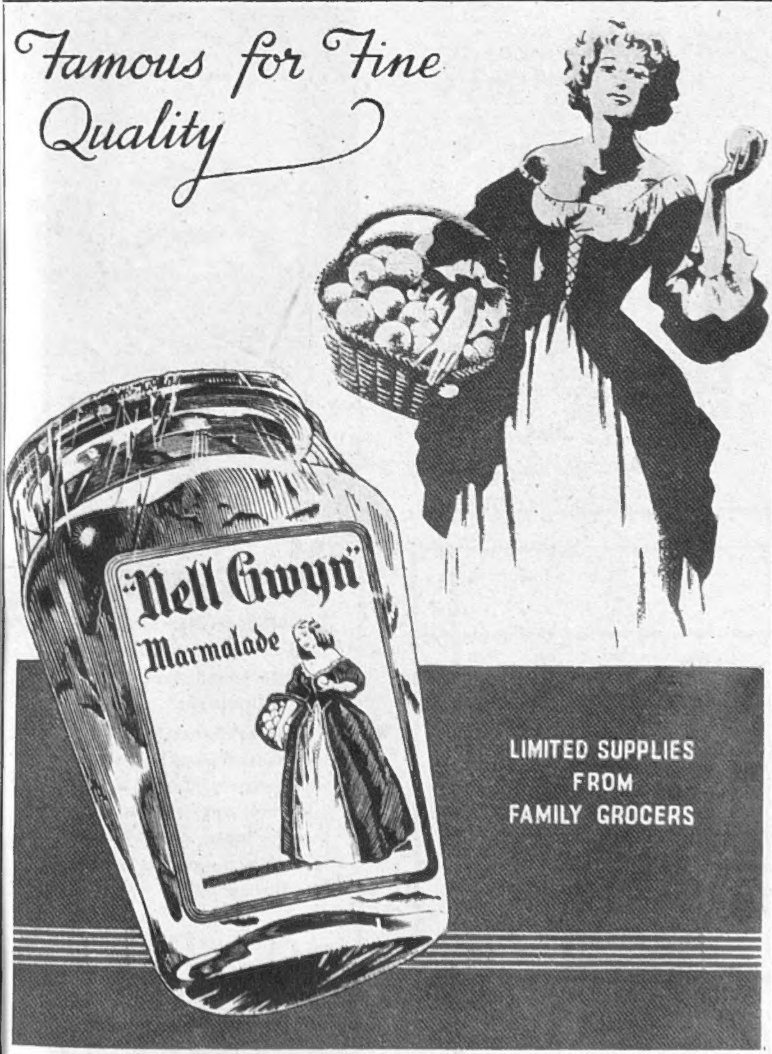

The Minni Cup

Norsemen toasted Thor and Odin and living kings in the "minni." What the drink was we do not know—possibly a kind of spruce beer—but "minni" came to have the meaning of love, memory and the thought of absent ones and the custom survived in England down to the middle ages and later in the "minnying" or "mynde" days.

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